Ans. 4365-23.

WT-MSB SCORPION

20 July, 1923.

From: Commander, U.S. Naval Detachment in Turkish Waters.
To: Lieutenant Commander Richard S. Field, U.S. Navy, Commanding, U.S.S. LITCHFIELD.

SUBJECT: Report of execution of former Czar of Russia and the Romanoff family.

1. The Detachment Commander wishes to thank you for the copy of the report of the execution of the former Czar of Russia and the Romanoff family which you forwarded from Odessa.

WEBB TRAMMELL
By direction.

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF THE UNITED STATES

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RSF:
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U.S.S. GOFF (247),
Constantinople, Turkey
28 June 1923.

RECEIVED
2 JUIL. 1923
OFFICE OF THE COMMANDER, U.S. NAVAL DETACHMENT IN TURKISH WATERS

From: Commanding Officer.
To: Commander, U.S. NAVAL DETACHMENT IN TURKISH WATERS.
SUBJECT: Execution of former Czar of Russia and the Romanoff family.

1. There is forwarded herewith in duplicate, statement of the Soviet government concerning the last days and execution of the Romanoffs. This statement was given to me by Mr. Hodgson of the American Relief Administration in Odessa. It had been given to him by Prince Pignatelli, an Italian diplomat who got it in Moscow. I remember a detailed article published in the Saturday Evening Post in 1920 which I believe gave these same facts in more detail, although so far as I know, this is the first statement issued officially by the Soviet government on this subject.

R. S. FIELD

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Note to the Editor.

The Soviet press has not yet published up to the present the events in connection with the fate of numerous representatives of the dynasty of Romanoffs who have been under arrest in several towns in the Ural.

The Ural Oblast Printing Department has decided to fill this blank and to publish on the fourth anniversary of the October revolution a magazine "The Workmen's Revolution in the Ural" containing documents and recollections referring to these events.

The Magazine begins with a description of the "Last days of the last Tzar" which contains a picture of the execution of Nikolas Romanoff and his family in Ekaterinburg and of the Grand Dukes Serge Micheilovitch, Igor Constantinovitch and Ivan Constantinovitch in Alapaievsk and Michail Alexandrovitch (Nikolas II brother) in Perm.

In view of the outstanding interest of these events and of circumstances which have called forth these events, we publish extracts of this description.

I.

Removal of the Tzar to Siberia.

Nicholas Romanoff and his family arrested by the Provisional Government, were originally detained in one of the palaces in "Tzarskoye Selo." Under the pressure of the growing indignation of workmen, soldiers and sailors against the Romanoff family as embodying the autocratic regime, the Provisional Gov't decided to transfer the "Sovereign Prisoner" to Tobolsk.

On August 4th, 1917, in a special train accompanied by two members of the Provisional Gov't and a detachment of convoyers, the Tzar's family and their retinue arrived in Tiumen and proceeded from there on board a steamer to Tobolsk.

II.

In Tobolsk.

Soon after the October Revolution there began to appear in the bourgeois press in the Capital, information relating to the life of Romanoffs in Tobolsk, the gathering of counter-revolutionary elements around them, a series of communications of provoking character on the flight and the contemplated kidnapping of the former Tzar.

The Tobolsky Soviet consisted at that time of Mensheviki and socialists-revolutionaries. There was no organised Communistic party.

The Romanoffs who were located in the former Governor's house enjoyed a relative freedom; they could correspond without being troubled, could receive commodities, etc. The Prince Dolgorusky, a

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former officer of the Guards, who resided in Tobolsk had free access to them. Other persons could likewise freely communicate with them.

However, a careful investigation confirmed facts of which the Ural Soviet was already informed, namely, the presence of counter-revolutionary elements and the activity of the Bishop Hermogen. Soon after this, the former head of the Provisional Gov't, Prince Lvoff, who had settled in Tiumen moi dimant on account of business was arrested.

III.

Measures taken to prevent flight.

In February 1918, at a meeting of the Ural Oblast Soviet, the question has been raised to transfer the Romanoffs to a safer place and to take immediate measures for preventing the escape of Nicholas Romanoff. Tobolsk having been at that time under jurisdiction of the West-Siberian Soviets, negotiations have been started with the latter regarding the removal of the Romanoffs. The W.S. Soviet agreed to Omsk, whereas the All Russian Executive Committee (VZIK) ordered their removal to the Ural.

IV.

The Removal of the Tzar to the Ural

The approaching spring and the bad roads made it advisable to expedite the removal of the Romanoffs. It was decided to transport Nicolas Romanoff, his wife Alexandra, daughter Maria and the Doctor Botkin at once. The Prince Dolgoruki was likewise taken with them. The remaining members of the family and the retinue of ladies of waiting and of servants were left in Tobolsk until the navigation opened.

In Tiumen the Romanoffs were put in a special train which brought them to Ekaterinburg.

V.

The Arrest of Prince Dolgoruky.

The Prince Dolgoruky whose behaviour aroused suspicion was arrested and put into jail. A search made at his home revealed a considerable amount of money, mainly small denomination, 2 maps of Siberia on which the water roads were indicated and special notes made. The confused answers of Dolgoruki left no doubt as to his definite intention to organize the escape of Romanoffs from Tobolsk.

VI.

The House of Special Designation.

The house of Ipatiev was chosen by the Ekaterinburg Soviet as a prison for the Romanoffs. The owner of the house was disledged; the house was surrounded by a fence to protect it from public curiosity.

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This house was denominated in Soviet circles as the "House of Special Designation." The "Commandant of the House" received the Romanoffs at their arrival.

It appeared that the luggage of the Romanoffs had not been examined neither at Tsarskoye Selo nor at Tobolsk. They have been requested to open their portmanteaux at once.

Nicolas submitted without attempting the slightest contradiction.

Alexandre said that she would not allow to examine her personal effects. An altercation with the "Commandant" arose.

It was intimated to the Romanoffs that they must remember that they were not in Tsarskoye Selo, but in Ekaterinburg, and if they forget themselves and were haughty, they would be isolated from the rest of their family. Another case of insubordination would entail compulsory work for them.

Alexandre and Nicholas understood that the "Commandant" meant what he said and submitted to his demands.

Five rooms of the upper storey of the house Ipatiev have been assigned to the Romanoffs. They were detained there and submitted to a regime which was not quite that of a prison. The son and the daughters who arrived in May were also imprisoned there.

VII.

The Guard of Romanoffs.

The Oblast Soviet kept an eye on the prisoners and the Red Guard located opposite the Ipatieff House watched them continuously.

Nicolas Romanoff exhibited an idiotic indifference to all that was going on around him and bore with relative calm the regime of the House. At the beginning he attempted to enter into conversation with the sentinels but upon prohibition he gave it up.

The attitude of Alexandre was quite different. She seized every opportunity to protest against the regime, abused the guards and the representatives of the Oblast Soviet.

VIII.

The Life of the Prisoners.

The Romanoffs received their dinners from a Soviet kitchen - the best in town. Two dinners per prisoner were issued daily.

The prisoners were conducted every day for a walk in a little garden attending to the house. They were at liberty to choose the hours.

Nobody interfered with their life inside the house. They were at liberty to use their time as they liked.

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IX.

The Activities of Monarchists.

As soon as Nicolas was transferred to Ekaterinburg, Monarchists of all colours began to flock there; half crazy ladies, countesses, baronesses, nuns, priests and representatives of foreign powers went on pilgrimage there.

However, only a very small number of persons were admitted. The authorisation had to be obtained from the Central Executive Committee. Therefore, the attempts to see the Tsar failed generally. Nevertheless, the Monarchist pack continued to cram the hotels and to write to the Tsar numerous letters, especially on Tsar holidays.

There were endless requests for being authorised to visit Nicolas or other members of the family. The motives put forth were various. There came representatives of the Red Cross of various Diplomatic Missions. Once came a member of the headquarters of the Servian Army, Mignitch, on pretext of obtaining personal information on the world war.

All this pack was of course denied access.

X.

The Workmen are Roused.

It became evident even to the large masses of the population that the Monarchists plotted in Ekaterinbrug with the intention to release Nicolas. The indignation of the workmen grew to such a degree that the Oblast Soviet were confronted with a possibility of an action on the part of the workmen who intended to lynch the Tsar and his clique who gathered around him. The 1st of May was fixed for the execution of this plan. The Oblast Soviet in order to prevent such unorganized action, was compelled to appoint its members to be on duty the 1 May at the Ipatiev House.

XI.

Ekaterinburg is menaced.

The growth of the counter-revolutionary movement among the Orenburg Cossacks, combined with the revolt of the Cheskho-Selvsk echelons constituted a serious menace to Ekaterinburg inasmuch as the front line approached and the local counter-revolutionaries were busy.

XII.

Just at that time the family of Romanoff increased; the Grand Dukes, Serges Michailovitch, Igor Constantinovitch, Ivan

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Constantinovitch and the Prince Paley were transferred from Viatka to Ekaterinburg. The widow of Serge Alexandrovitch, Elisabeth Fedorovna was likewise brought from Moscow to Ekaterinburg according to an order of the Tcheka.

The danger of the concentration of so many "illustrious guests" in Ekaterinburg in the proximity of the front did not escape the Oblast Soviet and the above persons were sent to Alapaevsk.

XIII.

Suspicious Delegates.

Among persons who were in close contact with the Romanoffs were arrested: the Servian Major Mignitch, his sergeant Vogevitch, and a certain Smirnoff, manager of the Servian Princess, Elena Petrovna, whose husband, the Grand Duke Ivan Constantinovitch, has been sent to Alapaevsk.

Three persons presented themselves as delegates of the Servian Ambassador, Solsikovitch, at first under the pretence of obtaining information from Nicolas Romanoff regarding the war, then they gave out to have come for the purpose of bringing back Elena Petrovna to Petrograd. They alleged to have an authorisation from the Central Gov't. Upon investigation it appeared that their request has been declined. The real aim ofMignitch and Vojevitch was clear and evident, but they failed to arrive at it.

XIV.

Correspondence of the Tsarina.

The front was approaching Ekaterinburg; the local counter-revolutionaries and the officers "loyal to the throne" endeavored to get in touch with the Tsar's family in establishing a regular correspondence with Nicolas Romanoff and mainly with his wife who exhibited a great activity and an uncompromising attitude.

Here is an extract of a letter written by plotters to the prisoners: "The hour of liberation is approaching. The Slavonic armies advance, they are in some verets from Ekaterinburg. The crisis is near, bloodshed is to be expected. We must act. Our friends do not sleep any more and hope that the hour so longingly looked for has come.

XX.

Possibility of Flight.

A delay of one month could have afforded Nicholas the chance of escaping abroad, where he would have played a leading part in the ranks of counter-revolutionaries. The world wide bourgeoisie would have used his name as a lever to crush the communistic party and to check its growth in all countries. However, their shrewd plans have been rought to naught.

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XVI.
The Officers.

Who were those daring people who attempted to interfere with the People's justice and wrest the dethroned criminals out of their hands?

Intercepted letters are mostly signed "Officer" or "One who is prepared to die for you" "Officer of the Russian Army."

Other facts which have come to the notice of the Oblast Soviet revealed the existence of an organisation whose object was to release the Romanoffs; in view of the proximity of the front they were prepared to carry out their plan without delay.

XVII.
Order to Shoot the Romanoffs.

The question regarding the execution of the Romanoffs has been already raised in June; however, it was definitely decided in the first days of July.

The organising and the fixing the day of the execution has been entrusted to the Presidium of the Soviet.

At the time when the Oblast Soviet signed the death sentence of Nicolas Romanoff and his family, the Chekho-Slovak front was quite close to Ekaterinburg and the counter-revolutionary bands were marching towards Ekaterinburg and from two sides - from Tchelisbinsk and along the West Ural Railway.

It was urgent to expedite the execution. A reliable, trustworthy revolutionary, a workman of the Isset factory, Petr Zakharievitch Ermakoff, was intrusted with this mission. It was of the greatest importance to carry it out in such a way as to make any interference on the part of the adherents of the Tsar regime, impossible.

Therefore, the following plan was adopted.

XVIII.
The Execution.

At night, on July 16, it was announced to the family of Romanoff that they had to move from the upper storey, downstairs. The whole family, the doctor Botkin, the "diadka" of the heir presumptive, the lady of waiting, a former princess - all who have remained with the Tsar's family, moved downstairs.

Here, in one of the rooms of the underground floor, the "Commendant" of the House, who was at the same time representative of the Ural Soviet, read to the assembled prisoners their death

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sentence and told them to give up all hope of escape. Hartled and stunned, they stood motionless and dumb. Only the former Tsar muttered some words, "Will we not be taken somewhere else?"

The revolutionary judgment was executed, the condemned were shot.

About 10 o'clock in the night the bodies were carried to a wood, outside the town, in the proximity of the Isset factory, where they were burnt.

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XIX
The White Guards in the City.

The white guards entered Ekaterinburg soon after these events took place; first of all they set out to search the country with the object of finding out the bodies of the executed members of the Romanoff family. An order was given to the Judge Sokoloff of the Oak Court to institute proceedings and he started up the case "Assassination of the Emperoro Nikolas and his family" in which he involved about 200 persons, the majority of which had nothing whatever to do with the execution of the Romanoff's.

The white guard newspapers were full of the most phantastical descriptions of the life of the Tzars family and their death.

People with lively imagination went ever so far as to affirm that the Romanoffs have succeeded in getting over the borders of Russia and were safe abroad.

The investigation undertaken by the military authorities discovered nothing.

The General Diederichs who was charged by Kolchak to direct the investigation declared officially that the Romanoffs were shot and their bodies destroyed.

An official interview of General Diederichs published in the white guards' newspapers in the time of Kolchak, reads, "I came to Vladivostok to investigate on the case of the assassination of Tzar's family. The High Commissioner intrusted me with the mission to ascertain all particulars establishing the fact of the assassination. The whole family of the Tzar and the Grand Duce have been killed; the first in Ekaterinbrug, the others in Alapevsk 60 versts from Ekaterinburg. They have been assassinated by order of the Ural Oblast Soviet in the night of July 16th.

XX.
The Ural is the Grave of the Romanoffs.

The Ural became the grave not only of the former Tzar and his family but also of many other representatives of the dynasty. The brother of Nicolas II, Michail Alexandrovich, to whom the Bourgeoisie wanted to transmit the crown in February 1917, after the abdication of Nicolas, was put to death in Perm in middle July. At the same time were destroyed in Alapaevsk the Grand Ducks: Serges Michailovich, Igor Constantinovich, Constantin Konstantinovich and Ivan Konstantinovich.

The Romanoffs are Obliterated Thoroughly.

The official Soviet newspapers restrained at that time from publishing orders concerning the execution of the members of the Romanoff family. This gave raise to, stories, relating to the flight of Romanoffs, to their living aboard. For instance, Michail Alexandrovich was said to live in the Crimea and to wait for the restoration of the throne. All this of course is rubbish.

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The decision of V.C.E.C.

At the meeting of Central Executive Committee held on July 18th, the President J. M. Sverdloff reported on the execution of the former Tzar.

The President of the C.E.C., after having considered the circumstances which compelled the Ural Oblast Soviet to sentence Romanoff to death, approved the decision of the Ural Soviet.

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